



“MEANINGLESS! MEANINGLESS!”

November 2013

“Meaningless! Meaningless!”

says the Teacher.

“Utterly meaningless!

Everything is meaningless.”

“I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.”

Ecclesiastes 1:2 and 14

What on earth could Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes, have meant when he said this? Were you to read the entire book with its repeated descriptions of life as meaningless, you’d wonder how it ever ended up in the Bible.

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But what he is saying makes more sense when we read in verse 14: *“the things that are done under the sun”* are meaningless. This line describes the things we do without God in it—life with a godless perspective, life that is not as God would have it. When we follow God’s will for us life *will* have meaning.

What would be meaningful for you? What do you think God’s will for you would be?

Frederick Buechner offered a clue when he wrote, *“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”*

What has God given you that makes you glad? Things that you love to do. Everyone has them. I don’t know where to start listing the various things people like doing or are able to do. So I’ll just leave you to mull over what that might mean for you.

Now consider how you could use your gift to serve others – your friends, your family, your community – maybe even the world. You may find a way to use what gives you joy to make a difference in other people’s lives.

Just think! You would no longer be living for yourself alone. The life you live can reach out to touch many, contributing to their welfare. That which fills you with “deep gladness” can help feed others’ needs. Think how living with such a purpose would be!

This is what a meaningful life looks like. This is the kind of life God is calling us to. And when God calls us to do something and we respond with an eager heart, it’s bound to bring satisfaction and fulfillment. Not only that, but such a life will also keep us strong and more resilient.

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